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March 11, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I am writing to provide you with an update about our efforts to ensure the health and wellness of Lexington City Schools students and staff in light of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Our division leadership team, with guidance from our health department, the Virginia Department of Health, and the Virginia Department of Education, is working together to prepare, educate, and respond should our area become directly impacted.

As of today, March 11, 2020, Virginia has nine confirmed cases of COVID-19. While preparing for potential future impact of this virus, just as with cold and flu season, we will continue to remind students, staff, and families to use prevention strategies to prevent the spread of germs. Here are some preventative practices we all can do:

- ❖ Wash hands regularly with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing and sneezing, before and after caring for an ill person, and before preparing foods and after eating. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol-based. As always, young children should only use with adult supervision.
- ❖ Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.
- ❖ Avoid coughing and sneezing into your hands or in the air. Cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue into the trash and wash your hands. If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your sleeve or elbow.
- ❖ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- ❖ Avoid close contact with others who are sick.
- ❖ Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that are frequently touched.
- ❖ Stay home when you are sick, except for seeking medical care.

We are taking the following steps at Lexington City Schools:

1. I have issued guidance to our principals, staff, and custodians about cleaning protocols on frequently used surfaces such as door handles, handrails, desks, tables, chairs, light switches, and so on.

2. I have reiterated to our schools that it is important that our bathrooms are fully stocked with soap, paper towels, and that hand sanitizer is available where sinks are not. We have purchased extra supplies in anticipation of higher usage.
3. We are monitoring school attendance and working with families with sick children. Please remember that if children are sick, they should not be in school. Students need to be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school after any illness. The same is true for staff.
4. We are staying in contact with our local health department and the Virginia Department of Health for the most current information and guidance.

As administrators consider various scenarios with regards to this virus, please know that we will consult with our local and state health departments regarding the possible need to close schools. In the event that one or both of our schools would need to close for a minimum of 14 days upon recommendation by the VDH, we will have options ready to provide continued educational opportunities for our students while they are at home. We strongly encourage families to consider creating family plans that include childcare needs in the event that schools close for an extended period of time. We also encourage you to make sure that the school has your updated contact and emergency contact information should your child become ill while at school.

Additional information regarding COVID-19 can be found on the websites of the Virginia Department of Health (<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/surveillance-and-investigation/novel-coronavirus/>) and Centers for Disease Control (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>). The number for the Virginia Department of Health Call Center is 1-877-ASK-VDH3.

Thank you for your partnership and cooperation as we continue to prepare for and respond to this evolving situation. As you are aware, the health, safety, and well-being of our students is our top priority. We will continue to provide information to our staff and families as additional guidance is made available to us by our health departments. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Rebecca J. Walters
Superintendent